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TAGS: [EUN](#) [EU](#) [GR](#) [MK](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [AU](#)
SUBJECT: AUSTRIA: SUPPORTING MACEDONIA'S EU MEMBERSHIP AND
RESOLUTION OF NAME ISSUE

REF: STATE 117721

(SBU) Polchief discussed reftel points November 20 with Thomas Schnoell, MFA Unit Chief for Southeast Europe. Schnoell said the GOA is hopeful for a "new dynamic" in Macedonian-Greek efforts to resolve the name issue, noting that the left wing in Greece, now in power following the October elections, is more flexible in its approach than the conservatives. He said the issue needs to be resolved through bilateral negotiations, under a UN umbrella provided by Matt Nimetz. Schnoell said EU member states are growing increasingly impatient with Greece for its insistence on blocking Macedonia's EU path because of the name issue. Given the European Commission's positive assessment of Macedonia, Schnoell believes member states may vote at the December 10 European Council meeting in favor of setting a date to begin accession talks with Macedonia. Greece could veto such a decision, but would face heavy pressure not to do so. Schnoell speculated that Greece may forgo a veto, and instead use its influence to slow the accession process later if the name issue remains unresolved.
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